THE EVILS OF ADULTERY and PROSTITUTION;

WITH AN

INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSES

OF THEIR

PRESENT ALARMING INCREASE,

AND SOME MEANS RECOMMENDED

FOR CHECKING THEIR PROGRESS.

Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers, God will judge.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN the preſent enlightened age, mankind have made conſiderable advances in different kinds of moral improvement, which do honour to human nature. The horrors of war have been mitigated; great reformations have been made in the civil conſtitutions of ſome of the countries in Europe; liberty has gained great advantages; religious toleration enlarged; the evils of ſlavery much ſoftened; and many extenſive charities have been erected. To theſe may be added, improvements on a leſs ſcale, but connected with theſe, and as branches of this general ſpirit; humane ſocieties inſtituted for reſtoring ſuſpended animation; the habitations of the priſoners rendered more comfortable; diſpenſaries erected in many towns for the relief of the ſick poor; and a rage for Sunday-ſchools that for ſome time has occupied the attention of this country.

But, notwithſtanding all theſe improvements, we are ſtill far from perfection. We have not that ferocity of manners, and that ſavageneſs of diſpoſition, that characteriſed other times; we ſeldom now hear of any of thoſe dark conſpiracies, and bloody aſſaſſinations, which were the vices of former ages: but we have vices of a different kind, perhaps equally deſtructive to the intereſts of ſociety, and equally unfavourable to domeſtic peace and happineſs: vices, which are favoured and encouraged by that very ſoftneſs of manners, and that effeminacy and refined ſentiment, which modern improvements have produced.

The leading vices of the preſent age, and thoſe that have the moſt extenſive influence on ſociety, are a looſeneſs

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of principle, a rage for ſenſual pleaſure, and a contempt for marriage: theſe introduce proſtitution and adultery, with all their train of woes. The youth, ſtrangers to wedded love and domeſtic comforts, range at large on the common of proſtitution; and, when diſpoſed to ſettle in the world, debauched by their former lives, it is no wonder that we find ſuch marriages unfortunate. Infidelity on both ſides ſoon takes place, till at laſt mutually diſguſted, the whole terminates in acknowledged and ſhameleſs adultery. Hence thoſe numerous ſuits for divorces, which are perpetually peſtering the legiſlature. Theſe conſequences, produced by the profligate manners of the worſt part of the ſpecies, create a general apprehenſion of marriage, even among the more virtuous, and thus increaſe the evils which this inſtitution was formed to prevent.

To ſtand up the avowed advocate for chaſtity in the man, may be treated as obſolete doctrine and viſionary labour. The undertaking will be looked upon with contempt, and expoſed to the ridicule of the one ſex, and I am not ſure that even the other, will think the advocate entitled to their thankful acknowledgment.

Under all theſe diſcouragements, have I ventured to take up this cauſe, and to endeavour to repreſent the effects of proſtitution and its allied vices on ſociety and on individuals; and to take notice of ſome of the cauſes that favour the progreſs of theſe vices, and render them leſs odious and deteſtable among men; and laſtly, to offer ſome hints for a reformation.

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EVILS

OF

ADULTERY and PROSTITUTION.

PART I.

IN ſociety, theſe vices introduce a general corruption of morals. This part might, perhaps, come in with more propriety afterwards: after ſtating the effects and conſequences of theſe vices, the injuſtice they lead to, the cruelty, the ruin of innocence, the weakneſs both of body and mind that they induce, the diſeaſes and confuſion that they bring into ſociety,—then we ſhould ſee how dreadfully they corrupt the morals of the world. But, without offering any thing further, at preſent, in proof of this corruption and depravity, we may reſt the deciſion on the general confeſſion of the libertine himſelf: though incapable of following, in many caſes, the dictates

of their own underſtanding, do they not univerſally allow, that the man fixed in wedded love, attentive to his wife as his beſt friend, pleaſed with and attentive to his lawful offſpring, is in the happieſt ſituation in life? What are the joys of the libertine when compared with his? An attachment, founded on injuſtice, can never always meet with the approbation of his own heart. Jealous, diſtruſtful, riſking often health and life in the purſuit, he knoweth no eaſe nor true peace. The well known ſtory of the yeoman of the guard, in the time of the profligate Charles II. preſents us, on the one hand, with a noble inſtance of a virtuous reſolution, and ſhews us, on the other, how far depraved morals will ſtifle the voice of conſcience, and ſubdue the beſt underſtanding. A yeoman of his guard had refuſed the advances of one of his miſtreſſes: at firſt he ſeemed not to underſtand her; but after an explanation, and when further preſſed, he replied, *I am married.* This ſtory, with all its circumſtances, was told to the king: he ſent for the yeoman,

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who had formerly ſeen better days. " Odds-
" fiſh man," ſays the king, " though I am not
" honeſt enough to be virtuous myſelf, I va-
" lue them that are." He gave him an ap-
pointment, and reſpected him for life. This is an inſtance of a man approving and rewarding virtue, who was incapable of following a virtuous life. It ſhews the fatal corruption brought on by lawleſs pleaſure.

The increaſing debauchery of the preſent age, and their open avowal of adultery and every kind of licentiouſneſs, introduce a general corruption of manners, a contempt for order, and a diſregard to the moſt ſolemn engagements. No vice can prove more fatal to diſſolve the ties of ſociety, to bring diſtruſt and diſtreſs into families: no vice can be more infectious, and have a more dreadful influence on the riſing generation. And, if the preſent age be arrived to ſuch a pitch of depravity in this part of morals, how frightful muſt be the proſpect with reſpect to that age which is to ſucceed? Youth have now an opportunity of ſeeing many of thoſe, whom,

in other reſpects, they are taught to look up to as examples, glorying in their debaucheries; and who are not aſhamed to acknowledge their ſenſual indulgencies. Such examples in a parent, in a guardian, and a friend, are truly dreadful. The excellency of the character in other reſpects, can never prove a ſufficient atonement for this. The errors and failings of reſpectable men, give only a ſtronger credit and a wider circulation to their vices: but what is ſtill more unfortunate, and is a proof of the general corruption of the age, we ſee no particular mark of reprobation ſet on ſuch characters: they are often treated with reſpect by all ranks, received into all families, and, ſo far from being diſcountenanced, they endure only a little harmleſs raillery, which rather feeds their vanity than is expreſſive of any ſincere deteſtation of the crime. What ideas muſt this treatment give to the riſing generation, of chaſtity, and the purity and ſanctity of the marriage bed. They muſt conſider ſuch virtues only as the exploded doctrines of devotees, or the language of hypocrites,

crites, but never meant as a rule of life for the man of the world.

Can we hope then for good fruits from ſuch an education? The riſing generation, we cannot expect will fall behind the examples which their fathers give them. If this corruption of morals proceed with the ſame rapidity that we have lately beheld, in a ſhort time the effects on ſociety muſt be dreadful. I look forward with horror from the precipice on which we now ſtand. Within the laſt twenty years, the advances of proſtitution have been very alarming. We may find ſeveral conſiderable and populous towns, where, twenty years ago, there was ſcarcely known ſo much as a common proſtitute, and the rake and the libertine were obliged, with fear and trembling, to reſort to ſuſpicious houſes; whilſt the care and attention which they employed to conceal their haunts, tell that a general corruption of morals had not yet overſpread us. But the caſe is now ſadly changed: the ſtreets of all large towns, every night, ſwarm with proſtitutes. The profligate goes, with little

reſerve, to their habitations: he glories in his wickedneſs, and even friends and parents themſelves wink at ſuch indulgencies and are not aſhamed to reveal his crimes. Such is the preſent ſtate of this part of morals: I wiſh I could draw a veil over the future proſpect.

But, beſides this general corruption of morals, the prevalence of this vice, and the great countenance it has received, have already had an unhappy tendency towards the diſcouragement of marriage. This effect muſt be certain and unavoidable. When gratifications are to be procured ſo eaſily, and are accompanied with ſo little diſgrace; when variety alſo offers its allurements; and when to theſe we add the many inſtances of infidelity to the marriage bed ſo lately publiſhed; it is no wonder that young men ſhew no great inclination to enter into a connection which ſhould be indiſſolvable, and where they are to come under the obligations of fidelity and conſtant love to one woman. Allowing themſelves a boundleſs indulgence of this kind, the attachment of ſuch young men to one particular woman, muſt be

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weak and very uncertain, and ſeldom can endure ſo long as to give time for the accompliſhment of marriage. Young men may ſtand aloof alſo for another reaſon: they dread the expences of the married life, ariſing from the dreſs, the extravagance, and luxury of the age, and from that ſpirit of gambling, which, not confined to the more robuſt ſex, ſheds its baleful influence and rage upon the breaſt of the delicate and tender female.

But this rage for ſenſual pleaſure proves not only a check upon marriage, but blaſts the peace and mars the happineſs of that ſtate. Difficult muſt the taſk be to fix the roving affections of a rake; and he, who has been accuſtomed to unbounded liberty and indulgence, will ſoon find the yoke galling which confines his affections to one woman. There may be inſtances to the contrary, but, I am afraid, theſe inſtances will be found to be extremely rare. When the taſte once becomes vitiated, it is not to be eaſily corrected: beſides, many of thoſe ties which confirm the obligations of marriage, are now greatly

looſened: the diſgrace marked upon infidelity; the general deteſtation entertained of the crime; the regard paid to an engagement ſanctioned by the ſolemnities of religion; all united to ſtrengthen the marriage tye, and thoſe whom God had joined no man durſt preſume to put aſunder. But moſt of theſe ties are now greatly weakened. The horror and deteſtation of the crime are now much leſſened by its frequency; a regard to public opinion has now leſs force, becauſe offenders are countenanced by their numbers; infidelity is become ſo common and ſo faſhionable, that it is ſcarcely regarded as a diſgrace, and men of all ranks ſupport it. It is amazing alſo what an effect mere words have upon many occaſions: they help to wipe off the odium of particular crimes: debauchery and adultery we only call *gallantry*; and thus men ſuffer their underſtandings to be impoſed on by the ſhameful and unwarrantable application of a term, and loſe, in the word, the horror and conſequences of the crime. This crime, called by the name of *gallantry*, is perhaps the moſt unjuſt,

unjuſt, the moſt miſchievous and cruel action, that can be committed; and, perhaps, you can ſcarcely name one that involves ſo extenſive and complicated a guilt. The effects of ſuch crimes extend far and laſt long. The families of both parties are often involved in the misfortunes, and, with them, frequently a number of their connections: and, beſides the miſery and wretchedneſs brought upon the ſufferers, this crime almoſt always leaves a ſtain upon families,and deſcends likewiſe to their poſterity. And yet theſe men frequently affect to call themſelves men of honour! After wounding their friends in the moſt tender part, and breaking through the moſt ſacred ties and eſtabliſhed order of ſociety; after robbing whole families of all future peace, and planting a dagger for ever in their breaſts, they would ſtill wiſh to be thought men of honour! A horrid proſtitution of terms! The guilt of the highwayman, and even the murderer, is, in many caſes, much inferior. Thus the momentary gratification of the ſenſualiſt entails often a fatal inheritance both on themſelves and a number of others.

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But it is a thing not uncommon, and become even faſhionable, to become advocates for licenſed proſtitution. The only argument that can ever be brought forward, in defence of ſuch an eſtabliſhment, is, that the married and virtuous part of the ſex may be leſs expoſed to the ſolicitation of unlawful pleaſure. But does not this argument avow, that you are to ſacrifice and ruin one part of the ſex for the ſalvation of the other. The licenſed eſtabliſhment of ſuch houſes muſt have a very contrary effect.

For, firſt, It is giving a ſanction to the crime, and, at the ſame time, taking away the odium, which is the beſt protection and ſafeguard of virtue. Many look for their rule of duty no farther than human laws; and what the laws allow, they muſt think in all caſes ſtrictly juſtifiable. A man that can once reconcile himſelf to the morality of proſtitution, will find it no difficult labour to reconcile himſelf to the debauchery of the moſt virtuous part of the ſex, when opportunity and a regard to ſafety will permit. The evil, with

reſpect

reſpect to the original morality of the action, muſt be as great in the one caſe as in the other, and all other barriers will be eaſily ſurmounted.

But licenſed proſtitution is, in effect, a proclamation for the encouragement of the crime; and irregular appetites may be encouraged, but are ſeldom cured by indulgence. Licenſed brothels, far from proving a ſafeguard to the virtuous part of the ſex, would only be a nurſery to train up youth to every kind of debauchery; and thoſe who would be bred up in ſuch a ſchool, would be the very perſons, who would debauch your wives and your daughters. Seduction, adultery, with all their hundred vices, will always be found to keep pace with the increaſe of common proſtitutes.

But beſides, licenſed brothels would operate as a powerful check on marriage, which every good man and every patriot ſhould by all means encourage. But there ſeems to be no occaſion for the legal eſtabiſhment of ſuch ſeminaries: they are in fact eſtabliſhed by connivance, and by the little diſturbance that they meet with from the laws and from the magiſ-

magiſtrate: they are eſtabliſhed by a ſilent approbation. But were young men indulged with no ſuch opportunities, were their crimes more diſcouraged by public opinion and ſtrong marks of diſgrace upon the offender; this would give the natural appetite a proper direction, and men would ſeek and find, in virtuous connections, that happineſs and peace, which they in vain hope to obtain in the purſuit of illicit pleaſure.

But another argument: the encouragement of proſtitution is the greateſt check to population. The unhappy females devoted to this life are, in general, the fineſt of women. It is their youth, beauty, and innocence, that render them the objects of temptation. Their very excellencies become their misfortunes, when they fall into the power of unprincipled and brutal men. Thoſe qualities, which ſhould command reverence and reſpect, only excite furious luſt; and all the amiable endowments and virtues which formed them for love and domeſtic happineſs, and to become a bleſſing to the married ſtate, are the very

very cauſes that work their ruin both for time and eternity. Thus the fineſt of women are for ever cut off from all uſefulneſs; and though deſtined for the ornament and bleſſing of the world, become its nuiſances and diſgrace. The lovely female, formed by nature to be the happy mother of a numerous offspring, is condemned by proſtitution to be a fruitleſs and rotten member, the outcaſt of ſociety, and the bane and ruin of families.

But it is not merely the change that paſſes on their perſons, and the uſeleſſneſs and diſgrace of their character, that we have to lament; for who can contemplate without horror that dreadful change that paſſes on their manners and that univerſal corruption of the moral principle. Brutal manners are the natural effects of a debauched life. Modeſty and baſhful innocence are exchanged for impudence and forward importunity; and ſhe that was educated in a ſtrict reverence of God and of his name, has her mouth conſtantly filled with blaſphemies and horrid imprecations. In theſe deteſtable habits, the ſoftneſs,

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the delicacy, and innocence of the female character are totally ſunk.

But this is not all. Every kind of moral depravity immediately ſucceeds: deceit, diſhoneſty, falſhood, and impoſitions of all kinds; and however ſtrong her attachment might originally be to truth, to rectitude, and integrity, the neceſſities of her life drive her to falſhood, to theft, and to robbery. Such unhappy females preſent a ſhocking picture of moral deformity. Under all the appearance of love, friendſhip, and tenderneſs, they are laying ſnares to rob and ruin the man, who, inſtigated by impure deſires, ſeeks after ſuch unfortunate connections. The female character, once diveſted of modeſty and baſhfulneſs, often paſſes to the greateſt extreme, and is capable, perhaps, of a greater degree of depravity than the other ſex. This is clearly proved in thoſe unhappy females: when once they commence proſtitutes, regardleſs of character, they openly ſolicit ſenſual gratifications. Being ſunk to this deep degradation, integrity and truth, ſobriety and religion, muſt all periſh, without a ſingle virtue

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remaining in the character to afford hope for repentance.

But ſeduction and adultery have alſo a baleful effect on the education of the riſing generation. The offspring of unlawful love has but a poor chance for a virtuous education. Cut off, by the ſeverity of human laws, from all connection with ſociety, they have no tender parent and no affectionate relation, to ſuperintend their infant or their youthful ſteps. The bare expence of their ſubſiſtence is looked upon as a ſevere tax, by thoſe who are the means of introducing them into the world; and they wiſh to rid themſelves, as ſoon as poſſible, of a burthen which they are apt to conſider as unjuſt and oppreſſive. Compelled to do no more than furniſh them with the bare means of ſubſiſtence, little care or pains will be taken of ſuch things as are either uſeful or ornamental. Human laws, in this caſe, provide only for the wants of the body; there is no proviſion made for the improvement of the talents or the cultivation of the mind.

The farther we advance, the proſpect grows ſtill more gloomy. Not only the offspring of unlawful

unlawful love, but alſo the lawful offspring of ſuch parents, as give way to criminal connections, muſt be greatly neglected. Example is the beſt inſtructor, and the beſt advocate for virtue; and a bad example given by the parent, muſt have a proportional bad effect on the child. The pureſt inſtructions will never be able to counteract the effects of a bad life. But, when the affections of married men are continually ranging beyond their own families, and their minds are engroſſed by a roving paſſion, little regard will be paid either to children or to wife. The future welfare of ſociety depends on the riſing generation. The whole world muſt ſoon be delivered up to their management, and the various parts of it will ere long be ſuſtained by theſe riſing characters. What then are the effects likely to ariſe, from the example and education given by men ſo diſſolute and abandoned?

But the evil does not ſtop here: there is no paſſion that has ſuch a fatal effect on the moral character in general as unbridled luſt; and none that can with more difficulty be reſtrained. When men once break through the rules of

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ſober temperance and lawful connections, they will deſtroy every barrier placed in their way, in order to gratify their unruly paſſions. Many who, in the beginning of theſe courſes, have ſhuddered at the bare mention of ſome of its horrors, have, in the progreſs of their vices, burſt through every principle, every tie of honour, every thing the deareſt to man and the moſt ſacred in ſociety. The obligation of duty, the principles of morals, however ſtrongly inculcated, the plighted faith, the ſworn friendſhip, will never be able to bind him who proves faithleſs to the marriage vow. The hiſtory of the world furniſhes us with too many fatal effects of ungoverned luſt. The neglect of families, ruined fortunes, ſuicide, parricides, dark aſſaſſinations, have in their turns been the fruits of this furious paſſion; and that courſe of life which deſtroys all principles of duty, muſt in the end murder all peace, comfort, and hope. When once a man deſpiſes the pure precepts of the goſpel, his next ſtep is to deſpiſe the goſpel itſelf. But it is one of the ſtrongeſt recommendations of this religion, that the way of life preſcribed by it,

is the moſt conducive both to public and private happineſs. I know, that men of the moſt debauched lives, do not always affect to deſpiſe religion: many attempt to reconcile the hopes of the goſpel, even with a diſſolute life; and by the vehemence of their profeſſion they wiſh to atone for the wickedneſs of their practice. Theſe are to be diſtinguiſhed from hypocrites, who only put on the appearance of religion to cover the wickedneſs of their morals, and, by this blind, to ſecure the good opinion of the world. We will, I believe, find good reaſons for admitting that falſe notions of religion may teach ſome men to believe, that God will overlook their abominable actions for the ſake of the fervour and warmth of their proteſtations and the ſtrength of what *they* call faith.

But there is another method by which men deceive themſelves in theſe matters. Perhaps they have ſome good properties, ſome ſhining qualities; and they may truſt that for the ſake of theſe God will overlook thoſe ſins which are conſtitutional and which do ſo eaſily beſet them. Many, of the moſt debauched manners, poſſeſs, at the ſame time, a generous and open diſpo-

diſpoſition, a tenderneſs of heart, a liberality of ſentiment, much good nature, an affable and a condeſcending behaviour: for theſe qualities, the world often gives them great credit, and therefore they may flatter themſelves that all their follies will be overlooked by their Maker: but the goſpel gives us reaſon to declare, that the moſt rigid punctuality in any one virtue can never atone for the diſorders and dreadful conſequences of ungoverned luſt: and the fact is, that all theſe barriers will be ſoon broken down—generoſity, liberality, affable and condeſcending manners, when once they ſtand in oppoſition to the furious deſires of a baſe and a depraved heart. Luſt changes the whole temper, and converts the man naturally generous and candid to a cruel and ferocious tyrant, utterly regardleſs of every thing but his own ſenſual gratification. Alexander the Great, naturally brave, humane and temperate, at the inſtigation of a miſtreſs, reduced to aſhes one of the faireſt, the moſt populous and beautiful cities of Aſia; Anthony fled from the field of honour and his friends, to indulge, in the embraces of a lewd and profligate queen.

This paſſion then, which produces ſuch a horrible change on the temper and morals, muſt have a fatal tendency to ruin all the noble hopes of man. A contempt for the pure precepts of the goſpel, muſt end with the loſs of all thoſe glorious views which it holds out to mortals. When once men abandon the paths of virtue, their next ſtep is to ſurrender the hopes of immortality; and it would be well for the honour of chriſtianity, if all who deſert its duties, and wantonly tranſgreſs its laws, would at the ſame time, ceaſe to be its profeſſors. Every ſenſualiſt ſhould be an infidel: this is their beſt, their only refuge, whilſt they reſolve to abide by their diſſolute life. There is no peace to the wicked, upon the principles of immortality. To obtain eaſe therefore, for his conſcience, and to poſſeſs his pleaſures with leſs diſturbance, he muſt plunge into the ſink of infidelity. How horrid then muſt be that courſe of life, that drives men from hope and comfort, from the dignity of his nature, to take ſhelter in the darkneſs of everlaſting deſpair!

Theſe then, are ſome of the diſmal effects, that lawleſs love produces in ſociety: let us next conſider its effects upon individuals.

The unhappy female, ſeduced from the path of virtue, becomes the firſt object of attention. One would think it ſcarcely poſſible that there would be found in the world, a man ſo far loſt to all ſenſe of juſtice and honour, as to be capable of forming a deliberate plan to enſnare and ruin an innocent and helpleſs woman. Youth and beauty, and even virtue, which ſhould command reſpect, are only ſo many provocatives to their furious paſſion, and hurry them on to compleat the deſtruction of the innocent victim. The prudence, the virtue, and the religious education of a young girl, are but a poor defence, when oppoſed to the art and cunning, the flattery, and delufive promiſes of treacherous man. That paſſion muſt appear deteſtable, which is gratified by injuſtice and deluſion, and horrid muſt be that heart that can deliberately ruin beauty, youth, and innocence.

From the moment of ſeduction, the miſery of the helpleſs victim commences. Lawleſs

This paſſion then, which produces ſuch a horrible change on the temper and morals, muſt have a fatal tendency to ruin all the noble hopes of man. A contempt for the pure precepts of the goſpel, muſt end with the loſs of all thoſe glorious views which it holds out to mortals. When once men abandon the paths of virtue, their next ſtep is to ſurrender the hopes of immortality; and it would be well for the honour of chriſtianity, if all who deſert its duties, and wantonly tranſgreſs its laws, would at the ſame time, ceaſe to be its profeſſors. Every ſenſualiſt ſhould be an infidel: this is their beſt, their only refuge, whilſt they reſolve to abide by their diſſolute life. There is no peace to the wicked, upon the principles of immortality. To obtain eaſe therefore, for his conſcience, and to poſſeſs his pleaſures with leſs diſturbance, he muſt plunge into the ſink of infidelity. How horrid then muſt be that courſe of life, that drives men from hope and comfort, from the dignity of his nature, to take ſhelter in the darkneſs of everlaſting deſpair!

Theſe then, are ſome of the diſmal effects, that lawleſs love produces in ſociety: let us next conſider its effects upon individuals.

The unhappy female, ſeduced from the path of virtue, becomes the firſt object of attention. One would think it ſcarcely poſſible that there would be found in the world, a man ſo far loſt to all ſenſe of juſtice and honour, as to be capable of forming a deliberate plan to enſnare and ruin an innocent and helpleſs woman. Youth and beauty, and even virtue, which ſhould command reſpect, are only ſo many provocatives to their furious paſſion, and hurry them on to compleat the deſtruction of the innocent victim. The prudence, the virtue, and the religious education of a young girl, are but a poor defence, when oppoſed to the art and cunning, the flattery, and deluſive promiſes of treacherous man. That paſſion muſt appear deteſtable, which is gratified by injuſtice and deluſion, and horrid muſt be that heart that can deliberately ruin beauty, youth, and innocence.

From the moment of ſeduction, the miſery of the helpleſs victim commences. Lawleſs

pleaſure is but a poor and ſhort compenſation for the loſs of innocence and character. The pleaſure muſt ſoon terminate, but life itſelf will not be ſufficient to lament the loſs. For ſome time, perhaps, the attention of the ſeducer, the intoxication of paſſion, preſent enjoyment, and liberal promiſes, may drown reflection, and ward off the throbs of anguiſh and the ſtings of remorſe; but that love which is thus purchaſed, will ſoon grow cold; attention will end in neglect, pleaſure in indifference; and many a diſtreſsful look towards that dignity from which fallen, and that horrible ſituation into which plunged, will awaken their ſevere and bitter reflections, which will laſt through life, and, perhaps, may endure through eternity.

The ſituation of a betrayed and deluded female, is of all others the moſt to be pitied: deſpiſed by her acquaintance and forſaken by her friends, caſt off and ſhunned, even to abhorrence, by him who firſt loved and then ruined her; the ſincereſt repentance can never again raiſe her to her rank in ſociety. To what, or whom can ſhe turn? The forſaken

miſtreſs

miſtreſs often becomes the common proſtitute, and, throwing off all the modeſty of her ſex, ſhe grows hardened and impudent in wickedneſs, and this drives her to the moſt deſperate extremes. When a woman once loſes her character, there is no length to which ſhe is not capable of going. She drinks often to drown reflection, ſhe waylays and ſeduces in her turn, either to gratify her paſſion, or to relieve her preſſing neceſſities; ſhe robs the man ſhe profeſſes to love—in the proſecution of this courſe, loathſome diſeaſe conſumes her vitals whilſt anguiſh preys upon her mind.

Thus ſhe, who, in the morning of life, attracted all hearts by the charms of beauty and innocence, long before the evening is avoided as a loathſome ſpectacle, and generally terminates her exiſtence in the moſt deſpiſed corner of a poor houſe or an hoſpital. Such are the almoſt undoubted conſequences of ſeduction, and the certain fruits of lawleſs love.

The hiſtory of the progreſs of this vice holds out ſome important leſſons to every female:

Narrow is the boundary frequently between

vice and virtue, and a moment may decide her fate and character for ever.

Beware of liſtening to the tale of men, ſuperior in rank and fortune to yourſelf.

Preſerve your chaſtity as your moſt precious jewel and brighteſt ornament, and always prefer the ſtation of a wife, however mean and humble, to that of a miſtreſs, dreſſed out in the moſt gaudy attire.

But the evil is not confined to the unhappy woman alone; her whole family and friends ſhare in the miſery and the diſgrace. The virtuous parents of a ſeduced female and a common proſtitute will ſeldom rejoice. What muſt be the feelings of that mind, which ſees all its blooming hopes blaſted in a moment, and her, whom they truſted would be the ſupport and delight of their aged years, ſunk in infamy and cut off from ſociety? All theſe muſt be againſt them, and muſt ſoon bring their grey hairs with ſorrow to the grave. Many a vain hope does a fond parent form: we hope much, ſometimes from their virtues, much from their abilities, and not a few are often flattered with the proſpect of their open-

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ing charms and beauty; but all theſe frequently prove nothing but vanity and vexation of ſpirit: abilities are often proſtituted, virtues tarniſhed, and beauty becomes their ſnare and their ruin.

But the loſs of innocence and character, muſt ever bear the hardeſt upon the feelings of a good parent. Application and diligence may ſupply the want of talents, but nothing can ever ſupply the loſs of character in a young woman.

But the diſgrace and diſhonour of one child, ſhed their baleful influence upon the remaining virtuous part of the family, and affect both their peace and their fortune. The innocent, as in many other caſes, ſuffer here with the guilty. Few would chooſe to be connected with a family ſo tainted, or to marry with one where they muſt call a common proſtitute ſiſter. The imprudent and vicious behaviour of one child, thus entails diſgrace and poverty on the remainder. But other circumſtances often help to increaſe their load: the inſulting behaviour of the man who diſhonours their daughter, muſt greatly heighten their diſtreſs,

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when the wretch that robs them of their beſt treaſure, is at the ſame time, triumphing over their misfortunes. To the diſgrace of human nature, there are certainly ſuch men; and men too, who call themſelves men of honour and gallantry. For a momentary gratification, they murder the peace of thouſands, and entail diſgrace and ruin on numbers of innocents, and that for life. The beſt of women may be unfortunate, but it reſts with the man to remove or confirm her ſorrows and her crimes. The generous man will endeavour to ſtop the progreſs of her misfortunes by every poſſible reparation: he will ſtrive to reſtore her character and her peace, and thus by wiping away the diſgrace and the crime, he will dry up thoſe tears that he cauſed to flow.

The ſtate of mind of the adulterer is the next object of attention and enquiry. Under a gay countenance there is frequently concealed a very ſad heart. The triumph, the intemperate riot and enjoyments of the ſenſualiſt, are ſhort lived and precarious, but his uneaſineſs is certain and laſting. The beſt we can ſay of his ſtate of mind is, that he muſt

frequently

frequently be diſtreſſed with bitter reflections. But this, it may be ſaid, is not peculiar to this vice: bitter reflections will always attend vice, under whatever form it appears. But there is perhaps no paſſion, that ſo occupies and tears the mind as does ungoverned luſt. Some of the violent paſſions are only temporary: they are momentary only. Revenge, hatred, anger —theſe ſeldom laſt long; but unbridled luſt is ever craving, perpetually tormenting. The conſequences alſo of this paſſion continually engage and rend the heart. He has to reflect on the ruin of innocence; on the diſtreſs of families; often on the ſacred ties of friendſhip he has broken through; on the injuſtice committed, in many caſes, againſt his wife and family, and on the bad example he has given to the world. The mind is occupied with ſchemes to accompliſh his criminal deſires, and his fears are conſtantly kept on the alarm from the dread of detection. This is that conſuming paſſion, whoſe deſires only increaſe by gratification. Job. xxiv. 15. gives an elegant deſcription of the various uneaſineſſes created by this paſſion. *The eye alſo of the adulterer waiteth*

waiteth for the twilight, ſaying, no eye ſhall ſee me, and diſguiſeth his face in the dark. They dig through houſes, which they had marked for themſelves in the day time: they know not the light, for the morning is to them even as the ſhadow of death: if one know them, they are in the terrors of the ſhadow of death.

When this paſſion ſo engroſſes the mind, it diſqualifies it for every great, uſeful, or generous undertaking. Perhaps it is difficult to find a man who has been the ſlave of luſt, that has ever produced any thing truly great or uſeful to the world. You may find great warriors among men of this claſs, accompanied alſo with many great qualities: ſuch was Henry the Fourth of France. You may ſee the ſeeds of greatneſs, in many of their characters, but they are ſo choaked and borne down by the prevalence of this paſſion, that nothing of any excellence is ever produced. The mental powers are ſo limited, confined, and debilitated by intemperance, that the mind cannot graſp ſuch things as are truly great and extenſive. Beſides, great mental productions require a ſteady and perſevering principle, conſtantly in exertion,

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which is too much for thoſe who are continually running after ſenſual gratifications. The greateſt of men have been noted for their peculiar temperance: among the ancients, Socrates is a remarkable example; and, among the moderns, we may rank the names of the great Boyle and the immortal Newton. We will give up to them, without reluctance, all thoſe prophane and immoral wits, whoſe polluted pages diſguſt and offend modeſt ears. In them, you may ſee the marks of great genius and abilities; but it is genius without direction, and abilities perverted and abuſed. Their works are the occaſional burſts and ſallies of great capacities, without regulation or controul. It is telling the world what they might have been, if their mental powers had not been borne down by the tyranny of an overruling paſſion. Their writings are far different from thoſe works which require the ſteady and cool exertion of the mind, conſtantly keeping its object in view, and uninterruptedly purſuing one great end, riſing and falling with the ſubject and deſign. In the works of your diſſipated men, every thing

is desultory; sometimes they rise high, and again they sink low, sometimes they feel strong and vigorous, at other times weak and pusillanimous, following inversely the tone and strength of the ruling passion.

But this passion, in a peculiar manner, affects the moral character. Independant of the criminal nature of the passion itself, it brings in its train an infinite number of other vices. To obtain gratification, men have been known to stoop to the greatest acts of infamy and meanness. Many whom avarice or ambition could not tempt to commit a dishonest act, or to submit to any thing mean or dishonourable, under the powerful influence of lust have trampled on principle, honour, friends, and all ties held most sacred among men. Those also, who give themselves up to unlawful pleasure, generally abandon industry, and all the honest methods of supporting themselves in the world. To gratify their passion, and, at the same time, to maintain their idleness, they are compelled to have recourse to a thousand infamous expedients: sharpers, pick-pockets, gamblers, and all that miscreant tribe,

tribe, owe, for the moſt part, their calling to the prevalence of this paſſion; and, were we to have a faithful hiſtory of the lives of highwaymen, we would find the origin of their misfortunes, for the moſt part, in unhappy female connections. This is the firſt cauſe of their departure from the path of moral rectitude; and when the bounds of duty are once broken through, they are better than half prepared for every crime. Led on ſtep by ſtep, they inſenſibly loſe every virtuous feeling and all the checks of conſcience; and they are not rouſed, till plunged in the depths of infamy and ruin. Thus, if the mental powers be much weakened by this paſſion, if it checks induſtry, application, and every noble exertion, it ſpreads a ſtill more unhappy effect over the moral and religious character: there can, in ſhort, be no bounds ſet to its corruption and depravity. Men have not only imbrued their hands in the blood of their fellow-creatures in the gratification of this paſſion, but, hurried on by brutal madneſs, they have murdered the very woman whom the moment before they had enjoyed; and that tu-

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mult, which the fury of this paſſion raiſes in the breaſt, ſtirs up a ferment of every evil deſire—jealouſy, remorſe, revenge, and deadly hatred. Luſt has been the cauſe of ſome of the moſt terrible calamities the world ever experienced. It has depopulated many rich and flouriſhing countries, and deſtroyed many opulent and fair towns. The hiſtory of the world will furniſh ſufficient evidence in confirmation of this reaſoning and argument, that luſt greatly corrupts and depraves all the moral powers.

But the effect of this paſſion on the moral powers is further ſeen, in its deſtroying all diſtinction between what is right and wrong. The adulterer, and the man who is perpetually in the purſuit of ſenſual pleaſure, ſoon begin to advance, that, in all theſe forbidden enjoyments, there is no moral turpitude; that, provided they can eſcape detection, there can be no injury and no harm. Thus the only crime you can commit, in debauching your neighbour's daughter and in ſeducing the affections of his wife, is the expoſing the action to the world, and in thus blaſting for ever her character

racter and murdering her peace. You can then, upon this principle, have no ſecurity for your wife's virtue, no protection from the aſſaults of brutal fury, but what ariſes from your own care and vigilance. The order of ſociety, the ſanction of the marriage vow, honour and chaſtity, are all mere names; bugbears, that ſerve to deter only ſimple fools, but are of no ſervice to bridle the luſt of thoſe who have been tutored in the ſchool of the world. Theſe are dreadful principles, which ſhould be ſeriouſly and powerfully oppoſed by all who wiſh well to the great intereſts and happineſs of mankind.

But let us leave the conſideration of the effects that this paſſion has on the moral character, and proceed to another part.

The effect that it produces on the taſte is likewiſe extraordinary. The man who abandons himſelf to lawleſs pleaſure, is ſeldom very nice or delicate in his choice. He ſcarcely can diſtinguiſh between the charms of the moſt virtuous woman, and the arts of the common proſtitute. Corporeal pleaſure, and of the groſſeſt kind, is all that he ſeeks for in the compa-

ny of women. Delicacy, modeſty, innocence, refined manners, and all the ſoft and pleaſing affections, have, for him, but little gratification. A beautiful face and a deſirable form, will reconcile him to the moſt diſguſting manners, and the moſt odious language. The man of taſte and refined ſentiment, is pleaſed, in the female character, only with ſuch things as are feminine; modeſty, innocence, the timid bluſh, the faultering voice, and that reluctance with which ſhe ſurrenders all her charms; but the rake and the male proſtitute, is at leaſt not diſguſted with maſculine manners, with impudence, with indecent geſtures, with bold and laſcivious diſcourſe, and with that forward importunity, with which ſhe ſolicits ſenſual gratifications, In the compariſon of theſe two characters, you may ſee the diſtinction between luſt and virtuous love: pure love gives a gentleneſs to the manners, and a ſoftneſs to the temper; it inſpires tenderneſs, humanity, compaſſion, and all thoſe pleaſing affections which form the beauty of the moral and ſocial character: but luſt excites ferocity and ſavageneſs in the temper; it gives a harſhneſs

to every feature; it ſtimulates to hatred and deadly revenge. Love purifies and exalts the ſocial character; luſt corrupts and deforms the man. Love gives to all nature a pleaſing aſpect, and renders man pleaſed with himſelf; but luſt caſts a horror over all, and tears up every generous affection from the human breaſt. But this leads to another unfortunate and horrid feature in this paſſion.

The roving affection of the rake never fixes long to any particular object; and this hunting after a promiſcuous gratification is always unfavourable to the tender ſex. The votaries of unlawful pleaſure never entertain a good opinion of women in general. Accuſtomed only to the worſt part of the ſex, and ſuch as are deſtitute of principle and conſtancy, and by experience convinced of the ficklenes and uncertainty of their affections, they form their judgment of the whole from theſe unfortunate ſamples: and the infidelity and inconſtancy they find among the moſt depraved of women, they aſcribe to the ſex in general. Theſe men of gallantry ſhould never be regarded otherwiſe than as falſe friends. Attached by no

tie but ſenſual gratifications, inſenſible to all the ſofter charms, you can have no hold of the beſt affections; and they will ſoon deſert their preſent love, whenever a new object preſents itſelf. Many of the moſt deſpicable of the common proſtitutes were once miſtreſſes highly favoured; but the ſeaſon of their power being now gone, they are turned abroad upon the mercies of the world, and by the viciſſitude of their fortunes, they tell, to even the virtuous part of womankind, how deceitful and faithleſs are the flattering promiſes of thoſe men who abandon themſelves to luſt. The man who can deſert a helpleſs woman, in the hour of her diſtreſs, whom he has ſeduced and ruined, will never prove faithful to any woman, and deſerves the abhorrence and deteſtation of the ſex in general.

After making theſe remarks on the effects of unlawful pleaſure on the mental powers, on the moral character and taſte, its effects on the body are too well known to require to be either deſcribed or expoſed. One of the moſt ſtriking effects is, that this life often terminates in a ſottiſh intemperance. This, to

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be ſure, might as well have been conſidered under its effects on the moral character; but as intemperance falls more immediately under the eye as it affects the health, the ſtrength, and the faculties, as it brings on diſeaſes and various kinds of bodily complaints, it may very properly be treated under its effects upon the body: the great agitation of ſpirits, the diſtreſs of mind, the mortifications and diſappointments, all accompanying or following this diſſipated and irregular life, often drive men to drown all care, thought, and reflection in intoxication. Low ſpirits are the certain fruits of a debauched life. Men, worn down by vexation and exhauſted in the purſuit of ſenſual pleaſure, ſtung by jealouſy, and torn by internal commotions, naturally flee for eaſe and ſome little reſpite to this ſhort lived and waſting expedient. That man muſt either be very œconomical in his pleaſures, or hard preſſed by the hand of poverty, who can avoid this laſt reſource. The two vices are ſo naturally connected, that ſeldom are they found aſunder. The rake generally ends a

ſottiſh drunkard, and thus the powers both of body and mind ſink together.

But beſides leading to drunkenneſs, this paſſion, and this irregular life, bring on, more immediately, other defects—debility, languor, and diſeaſe. The repreſentation of its conſequences would be too groſs to find a place here. Providence has wiſely ordered, that many of thoſe purſuits unfavourable to the moral character, ſhall be equally prejudicial to health, and ſtrength, and even to fortune: ſo that if principle, a ſenſe of duty, and other excellent and noble motives, ſhould prove too weak to check thoſe men who have abandoned themſelves to an irregular life, the waſte and diſorders committed on the body by theſe purſuits, might tend to alarm ſuch unhappy wretches, and that their pains and ſufferings might ſerve as a warning to others to avoid theſe fatal ſnares. No object can be more forbidding and diſguſtful, than one of theſe wretches, labouring under theſe dreadful diſeaſes, brought on by a debauched life: they are ſhunned and deteſted by ſociety; they are loathſome and offenſive to their deareſt friends.

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Providence thus ſets the ſtrongeſt marks of diſapprobation on their lives, by thoſe diſeaſes and corruptions to which they are reduced.

Collect now into one view the whole of this repreſentation. Can we expect, then, that a man of theſe looſe principles, of ſuch morals and taſte; a man tainted with diſeaſe and infirmities, and who, in the prime of life, wears all the marks of decrepitude and old age, will make either a good huſband, a good father, or a true friend?

The maxim, that rakes make the beſt huſbands, is often uſed as an apology for that life, and, like many other maxims, has obtained credit in the world, without any foundation either in obſervation or experience. The experiment, however, will always prove hazardous; for there is no other chance for its ſucceſs, but a crazy and worn-out conſtitution. Neither prudence, attention, nor charms, will ever be able to fix a roving affection or to correct a vitiated taſte. If former unlawful connections be not renewed, yet there is the utmoſt hazard that he will ſoon run abroad in queſt of new pleaſures. Principle has but a

ſlight hold of him, who has been ſo long accuſtomed to view ſuch actions as harmleſs indulgencies, as following only the calls of nature, and who has effectually deſtroyed all ſentiments of duty, by the irregularities of his paſt life. There is but a poor proſpect of happineſs for the woman connected with ſuch a huſband. Soon muſt ſhe prepare to experience neglect and every kind of ill uſage; ſoon will ſhe have her happineſs embittered by jealouſy, and often alſo muſt ſhe herſelf be openly inſulted by ſome hated rival.

And, when once diſcord and criminal connections break the peace and harmony of a family, trouble and confuſion immediately pour in upon every part. The unhappy children will be among the firſt and greateſt ſufferers. Whatever parent be the offender, miſery and neglect muſt be the portion of the child. When the unnatural mother, ſtimulated by lewd deſires, forſakes her houſe, her huſband, and her offspring, what muſt be the fate of the helpleſs orphans, thus left to neglect and ſcorn. Children are more immediately under the eye and care of the mother:

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from her is expected more attention and tenderneſs: abandoned by her, they loſe their chief guide, the director of their infant ſteps, their companion and their friend. If the failure be on the other ſide: when the wife once loſes the affections of her huſband, and her due rank and influence in her family, with theſe ſhe loſes her ſpirit and all her command. A broken heart is an ill condition to contend with the many difficulties in the education of children. Diſcouraged and ſunk, ſhe is equally diſqualified either to command or adviſe. A peeviſh and a ſoured temper, brought on by ill uſage, deſtroys that ſerenity of mind and that gentleneſs of diſpoſition, which are ſo neceſſary to bear with all the little humours of our offspring. In both caſes, the want of a good example is the greateſt defect. The example of a parent is the beſt inſtructor; but the examples of *ſuch* parents muſt be carefully concealed. It is dreadful for children to be reduced to the neceſſity to wiſh to baniſh for ever from their remembrance thoſe who brought them into the world.

There muſt be ſomething peculiarly diſ-

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pleaſing to every member of that houſe, where ſuch diſſentions and animoſities reign. Ill regulated, ill governed, jarring and ſuſpicious, every member ſeems to breathe a poiſonous air: how different far from that abode, where conjugal happineſs diffuſes peace, order, and harmony in every part?

There is certainly no ſituation in life that ſtands a fairer chance for happineſs, than the married ſtate. When ſuch a connection is formed in virtue; where there is a union of hearts and blaſted by no ſelfiſh views; when the morals are not depraved, nor the heart corrupted by criminal connections; where can ſuch pure happineſs be found? To have a friend, to whom, with confidence, you can communicate your moſt intereſting concerns, whoſe intereſts are common and happineſs mutual, who ſhares in all your joys and leſſens all your ſorrows; and when this union is further cemented by the ties of a common offspring, in whom all your cares, and labours and views center, what joy on earth can be equal to this? The man who is in poſſeſſion of this domeſtic happineſs, always finds home

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his moſt delightful retreat: here he can unburthen himſelf of all his cares, and here he finds a boſom that ſhares in all his joys. When oppreſſed, he knows one that will feel tenderly for him and help to bear his burthens: when retiring from the tumult of the world, he knows where to find true peace. This pleaſing connection braces his ſtrength and gives him vigour under all his toils, as the fruits of his labours are to encreaſe the happineſs of thoſe who are deareſt to him in life. He has ever in view the beſt of objects and the moſt refined gratifications, and his mind is never torn with the war of bad paſſions. In whatever part of the world he is, his heart always points homeward, as to the center of all his objects and deſires. The pleaſures of the ſenſualiſt, and the joys of the debauchee, are diſguſting and loathſome, when compared with the pure joys of conjugal love.

PART II.

Cauſes of the preſent alarming increaſe of Adultery and proſtitution.

AFTER thus tracing out the miſchief of unlawful pleaſures, let us attend to ſome of the cauſes that ſupport and encourage the prevailing rage for ſuch a life.

The example of men of rank and fortune may be aſſigned as the *firſt*, and a very powerful cauſe. It is from them that we are to expect the lead either in virtue or in vice. The profligacy of the manners of the great, at firſt, may be viewed with diſguſt; but they will inſenſibly work their way in the world, in ſpite of all the attempts to ſtem the torrent. By degrees, they deſcend from the palace to the cottage. Their numerous connections and dependants ſpread the infection all around: and when men are once accuſtomed to behold vice, and eſpecially when accompanied with rank and fortune, the horror gradually vaniſhes, and there are always found enough to ape their manners, and to copy even all their vicious faſhions. The debauched court of

Charles

Charles II. infected the whole nation, and planted the ſeeds of thoſe very vices, which we are now lamenting, and which have never yet been eradicated. Adultery and profligacy were kept in countenance by rank and faſhion; and, notwithſtanding ſome great and good examples in ſome of the ſucceeding princes, theſe vices, ſtriking deep root among the great, have ſtill maintained their power and influence. The prince at preſent on the throne is an illuſtrious example of every kind of temperance, and, for the honor of the nation, ſome of his firſt miniſters have been imitators of his virtues: among theſe, the preſent miniſter is to be particularly diſtinguiſhed. But in ſpite of the good example both of the prince and of his miniſter, many of the leading men, both in and out of court, are ſcandalous examples of the moſt profligate and debauched manners; and, what is one of the ſtrongeſt ſymptoms of the ſhocking degeneracy of the age, inſtances of pure and exemplary manners in high life, have been held up to ridicule, and expoſed as a mark of weakneſs of underſtanding and narrowneſs of ſpirit: and all this

wanton

wanton and profligate ridicule has excited no juſt and general indignation. This is a ſad ſign of the times, that can ſo tamely bear virtue and exemplary innocence to be held up to deriſion; whilſt at the ſame time vice boldly expoſes her hardened front. Men are not aſhamed of the diſſoluteneſs of their manners, but on the contrary openly avow their ſcandalous and lewd connections. A general reformation of manners will never take place till great men take the lead. They have much in their power: a virtuous nobility muſt be the greateſt bleſſing to a nation, but a profligate nobility muſt be the greateſt curſe. Men's influence is in proportion to their rank and ſtation, and ſo alſo will be their account.

But a ſecond cauſe muſt be ſought for in the luxury and opulence of the nation. Theſe operate in a manifold proportion: luxury inflames the paſſions, whilſt it affords means for their gratification. Luxury introduces a contempt for order; it encourages idleneſs; and nothing can be ſo unfriendly to virtue, nothing ſo much feeds bad paſſions. I am not inclined to indulge in general declamation againſt

againſt the manners of modern times, or diſpoſed to give a decided preference to antiquity. Perhaps the preſent is not inferior in general virtue to the times that are paſt; but a rage for pleaſure may undoubtedly be regarded as the characteriſtic vice of the age. Women of rank, and indeed too many in inferior ſtations, ſeldom now occupy themſelves with domeſtic concerns: continually roaming abroad in queſt of pleaſure, their families and children are left to the management of inferiors, by whom their real intereſts or their morals may be but little regarded. The playhouſe, the maſquerade, balls, routs, and aſſemblies, and other places of pleaſure and entertainment, are their perpetual haunts. There every bad paſſion is raiſed, and in this ſcene of diſſipation and idleneſs, every bad example is perpetually before their eyes. At ſuch places, opportunities are never wanting; traps are conſtantly laid for enſnaring virtue and innocence; virtue is ridiculed and vice exalted; and what muſt be the natural conſequences of this life? Theſe are ſchools for lewdneſs, and the example deſcends

ſcends from the gay and the opulent to thoſe in the loweſt ſtations and fortune.

But a third cauſe is the ready circulation which is given to this vice. The daily papers are conſtantly retailing connections of this kind; and thus they become the vehicles of vice from the center to the moſt diſtant corners of the kingdom. They are told as articles of news, and as common occurrences, which excite neither ſurpriſe nor deteſtation. It may be queſtioned, whether a well-regulated police ſhould admit of the circulation of ſuch debaucheries? A check of this kind might be an infringement of our liberties, but what it takes from our liberties it would give to our morals. Liberty will never ſtand long without the aid of morality. There is a certain point of depravity, to which, whenever we come, then we and our liberties muſt ſink together. *Righteouſneſs exalteth a nation, but ſin is the reproach,* and will be the downfall, *of any people*: and there is no vice that can have ſuch a powerful tendency to precipitate our fall, as the vice againſt which theſe remarks are directed. It corrupts, it weakens, and

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muſt in the end diſſolve the bands of ſociety. The preſent practice of circulating ſo fully and ſo ſpeedily, every article of this kind, is a poiſon to the youth, and indeed pollutes every age. Adultery and elopements conſtitute a material part of our news, and, being commonly retailed with numerous and minute circumſtances, help to inflame the paſſions, and to abate our horror for the crimes. No paragraphs are more greedily read, than thoſe which relate to buſineſs of this kind.

But, not content with making them an article of news, you have frequently the whole trials for adultery and rapes publiſhed at full length, with every circumſtance belonging to them. The rapid ſale that ſuch productions meet with, is an encouragement to the publication. The courts of law certainly have ſome power to prevent theſe publications; or if the courts cannot prevent them, if they cannot be indited as nuiſances, certainly the legiſlature ought to interfere to prevent the great injury done to the morals of the people. It cannot be below the dignity of the two houſes of parliament; they often buſy themſelves about objects of

much leſs conſequence; they are particularly attentive to their dogs and game, and trifles of that nature, whilſt ſuch glaring depredations are committed with impunity on the morals and principles of the ſubjects. The alarming length to which ſuch impudent writings are carried, loudly calls for the interpoſition of parliament. There are publications actually eſtabliſhed and encouraged, (magazines of different names,) for the expreſs purpoſe of circulating ſuch infamous morals. And ſuch is the rage of the times for articles of this kind, and ſo ſhameleſs and barefaced are men grown in their encouragement, that even publications, otherwiſe reſpectable, are under the neceſſity of polluting their pages with the relation of lewdneſs and debauchery; for, when once admitted into any of the periodical publications, the moſt chaſte and the beſt regulated are compelled to give them a place, otherwiſe a number of their readers would conſider the omiſſion as a great defect, and might be tempted to withdraw their encouragement: thus ſuch morals have a fair chance of being handed down to poſterity. Publications then

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that have ſuch a powerful effect to corrupt the morals of the people, merit moſt certainly the attention of government. No plea of liberty ſhould ever countenance ſuch deteſtable principles as muſt in the end ruin the nation.

A fourth cauſe of the profligacy of the preſent age, is that maſs of novels and romances which people of all ranks and ages do ſo greedily devour. This is a new ſpecies of entertainment, almoſt totally unknown to former ages. The very few old romances that we have, is a proof that that kind of reading and writing never till now met with any kind of encouragement. The great encouragement given to productions of this kind is a great mark of the frivoloufneſs and effeminacy of the preſent age, and a ſtriking characteriſtic of their manners. Deſpiſing that kind of reading which conveys knowledge and improvement, they attend only to that kind which deludes and amuſes. To thoſe occupied entirely with ideal characters and ideal manners, the ſubject is not more rational, and by no means ſo intereſting and ſublime, as the witches, the furies, and the enchantments of former times. If future generations partake of more regulated manners, they

will be as much ſurpriſed at the attention paid to theſe non-entities, as we ſmile at the ſimplicity of our forefathers for their belief in magic and enchanted caſtles. Novel writers, in defence of ideal characters, may plead the example of the ancient epic and dramatic writers; but the manners of theſe were more ſplendid and dignified, and the maſterly execution and bewitching charms of the writers have alone preſerved them from oblivion. Only two poems ſtrictly epic have ſurvived the ravages of time. The ſcarcity therefore of theſe writings tell us, that ſuch a ſpecies of writing was either not much in requeſt or that the ancients were extremely nice and delicate in their choice.

But the advocates for novel writing always come forward with this very plauſible plea, that novels and romances are the great teachers of morals; but the moral, I am afraid, generally lies deep, and is not often ſeen by the generality of readers, whilſt the looſe manners and principles ſwim on the ſurface, and are readily caught by the moſt careleſs obſerver. Many are perfectly acquainted with every part of theſe imaginary hiſtories, but very few can ſee the inſtruction.

Novels have an unhappy effect on the rising generation; they debauch the morals, and they corrupt the taste. Were there only an equality of chances in favour of morals, this might stand as an apology for these writings: but the fact certainly is, that where one is instructed, one hundred are poisoned. Such as devote their time to this species of reading, are seldom capable of attending to books where solid instruction is conveyed; they never can be expected to relish that reading which requires any degree of attention or any stretch of thought. This light and airy reading gives a play to the fancy and imagination: it affords amusement, but furnishes neither knowledge nor instruction. But the worst effect: novels dress out vice in pleasing colours, gild over all its deformities, and thus insensibly instil the deadly poison into the thoughtless and unwary heart. The dissipated rake, who glories in his debaucheries, is painted often as humane, generous, and benevolent; whilst the heedless female, for the sake of these accomplishments, forgets his want of principle, his diseased body, and his rotten heart. This kind of employment is worse than idleness. Many young girls, from morning

to night, hang over this peſtiferous reading, to the neglect of induſtry, health, proper exerciſe, and to the ruin both of body and of ſoul. And this pernicious practice is not confined to girls only of fortune, but extends to every age and rank; and there are inſtances even of ſervant girls who are well acquainted with all the faſhionable romances. Full of the romantic ideas that they collect from ſuch books, they long to copy the manners, and to ſhare the fate of ſome of their favourite heroines. What confidence can you place in the virtue of ſuch admirers? how unfit for the management of families? and what hopes can you have of them either as wives or as mothers? The increaſe of novels will help to account for the increaſe of proſtitution and for the numerous adulteries and elopements that we hear of in the different parts of the kingdom.

And this leads me to another cauſe which naturally follows theſe, and ſhould of courſe alſo come after them in this arrangement. The frequency of this crime, our conſtantly hearing tales of this kind, the example of men of rank and fortune, the prodigious increaſe of novels and of the looſeſt kind, all help to render men familiar with theſe

vices,

vices, and to abate the horror we ſhould entertain againſt ſuch practices. Make any vice familiar to man, and it ſoon loſes its horror. In the great towns vices of this kind have been long too frequent, but it was long before our youth could be found ſo bold as to boaſt of ſuch connections, and tell without ſhame their attendance upon common brothels. In many parts of the country, not many years ago, the having a baſtard child was conſidered as a blot in the character: but the times now are greatly altered; and this woeful change has ſpread itſelf even to the remoteſt parts of the country. Young men now make no ſcruple in confeſſing their criminal connections, and feel no ſhame in acknowledging their lewdneſs, not only before their companions, but in the company alſo of the graver part of mankind, and even in the preſence of the virtuous part of the other ſex. Can we then be ſurpriſed that the increaſe of ſuch vices is ſo prodigious? What ſecurity can you have for the honour of your wives and daughters? nothing but the want of opportunity. Free from all reſtraint, from principle, loſt to all ſenſe of ſhame, and devoid of all ſentiments of juſtice and honour, theſe profligate

wretches only watch times and ſeaſons to rob you of your peace, your honour, and your happineſs. Following, as they plead, the calls of nature, they reaſon that they are guilty of no injuſtice, provided they can only eſcape detection. It is the diſcovery that breaks your peace of mind; and taking care of this, they account that they have nothing further to apprehend. The preſent age is now grown ſo wiſe, they firſt argue themſelves out of all the principles of revealed religion; and delivered from this bugbear, they break down all morals, and thus rob men of their deareſt and moſt valuable enjoyments.

But, in an enquiry into the cauſe of the progreſs of this vice, we muſt not paſs by what may be deemed the moſt powerful of all cauſes, and which operates likewiſe as an encouragement; and that is, the ſmall value, that, according to the preſent manners, the moſt virtuous of females ſet upon the chaſtity of the other ſex. In their choice they ſeem to make no diſtinction between the rake and the man of character: chaſtity in the male ſex they ſeem neither to expect nor require. If men, therefore, devoid of every good principle, find profligacy and debauchery no bar

to the gaining the affection of the moſt virtuous of women, what other cauſe can they have to lay themſelves under any diſagreeable reſtraint? They will follow every ſenſual pleaſure, and purſue promiſcuouſly every enjoyment, becauſe, whenever they chuſe to retire, they find a ready and a welcome reception from many of the beſt of women.

Were the ſame marks of reprobation ſet upon the proſtitution of the one ſex that there are upon the other, this would be of the utmoſt ſervice to cure the vices of both. If the debauched rake were as generally avoided by people of character as the common proſtitute, marriage would become of courſe more common, the connection alſo in general more deſirable. But this is far from being the treatment that men of that abandoned character receive even from the female ſex. The rake is not a name of deteſtation, but rather an appellation of innocent raillery; it gives no offence or diſguſt, but appears rather deſirable, and carries with it no more of odium or reproach, than a wag, a rogue, a graceleſs or a clever fellow: it implies in it ſomething of fondneſs or endearment, but nothing of cenſure or condemna-

condemnation: it is a mark of freedom in her that beſtows it; and the other generally receives it as a compliment. How can we account for the indelicacy of the female ſex in this point! and what idea muſt they entertain of pure love? If a man look upon it as diſhonourable to take for his wife her who has been a proſtitute, and think it the higheſt indelicacy to be connected with that woman who has been common to ſo many other men; how does the woman, who, in other reſpects, has more refined ideas of delicacy, reconcile it to her feelings to marry the man that avows his connection with a variety of others? Can ſhe ever hope to have the full poſſeſſion of that heart which has been pledged to thouſands before? The recollection that ſhe is lying in thoſe arms in which a common proſtitute lay ſo lately, muſt rouſe the moſt unpleaſing ſenſations, and muſt bring acroſs her mind very often that ſhe is no more but a ſecond to a whore. Such feelings muſt at times ariſe; and whenever they come, they will bring with them no tenderneſs and no love, but muſt rouſe diſguſt, averſion, and reſentment. Worldly intereſt or paſſion may form an ill-judged and precipitate connection, but when

cool

cool reflection returns, they will find, at beſt, only indifference in all connections not founded in virtuous love.

The female ſex have much in their power: they may preſide at the head of taſte and of morals if they will only manage and govern themſelves. Whenever a reformation takes place, here muſt be the beginning. Let them rouſe themſelves to a proper ſenſe of their own dignity, and treat with contempt that man who diſhonours their ſex and encourages proſtitution, and this will be the beſt means to put a ſtop to the progreſs of that debauchery and looſeneſs of morals which at preſent ſo generally pervades all ranks. All is in their power: they may make men virtuous or vicious as they pleaſe; and, what is more, a reformation in this part of morals muſt be the beginning of a general reformation. Debauchery is the fountain of corruption. Much depends on a reformation here: this would make marriage not only a more ſacred but alſo a more happy connection. All other reformations are only palliatives and partial: thoſe may be cutting off ſome infected limbs; this is beginning at the very ſource. Put a ſtop to or check the progreſs of proſtitution,

proſtitution, and you ſupport conjugal fidelity, you encourage marriage, you deſtroy celibacy, you provide the beſt inſtruction for the riſing generation, and, what is ſtill more, you give the beſt aſſiſtance and evidence to religion. Whilſt men's lives are profligate and their manners corrupt, they find it for their eaſe and intereſt to throw off all the ſhackles of religion: in their ſituation religion is no more but a galling yoke: you can never reconcile a debauched life with the hopes of the goſpel.

PART III.

Means for checking the Progreſs of Adultery and Proſtitution.

BUT, I believe, it will be found much eaſier to expoſe the miſchiefs and to inveſtigate the cauſes of this diſorder than to propoſe an effectual remedy, I know it is difficult to encounter a ſtrong paſſion, ſtrengthened too by ſo many powerful ſupporters. Men, in many caſes, will not liſten to their real intereſts; and, what is as certain in many caſes, they will not act according to their convictions: they will rather chuſe to follow the ſtream of their own inclinations, and to proceed in obedience to their paſſions, than to attend to the cool dictates of reaſon, and the obſolete precepts of morality. But the following applications might be of ſome ſervice, if not to deſtroy, however to mitigate theſe evils, providing men would exert themſelves and endeavour to reduce them to practice,

Firſt, diſcourage celibacy, and encourage marriage: the encouragement of marriage is not only promoting purity of manners, but is alſo agreeable

ble to ſound policy. Whilſt it protects the morals of the people, it, at the ſame time, increaſes their numbers. Children, born in marriage, have the beſt chance of being good citizens. Some of the wiſeſt legiſlators of antiquity ſaw this in ſo ſtrong a light, that, to diſcourage unlawful intercourſes between the ſexes, they enacted that, whereas, in all other caſes, children were bound to maintain their aged parents, baſtards were exempted from this obligation. The increaſe of marriage would be the beſt means to reduce the number of common proſtitutes, and alſo to leſſen the neceſſity. Marriage was particularly honoured among the wiſe Romans: the conſul who had the moſt numerous offspring was the firſt who received the faſces: he had alſo the choice of the provinces. If an inhabitant of Rome had three children, he was exempted from all troubleſome offices. As they had rewards for marriage, ſo they had alſo penalties for celibacy. All women, under forty-five, who had neither huſband nor child, were forbidden to wear jewels or to ride in litters. Thoſe perſons who were not married could receive no advantage from the will of any perſon who was not a near relation.

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There were a variety of others beſides theſe, all tending to expreſs the honours and encouragements that they conferred on this ſtate. The ſpirit of theſe laws might, with great propriety and wiſdom, be transfuſed into the inſtitutions of all well regulated ſtates. Not only ſhould batchelors be ſubject to greater taxes and burthens, but alſo diſqualified for holding certain offices of truſt and honour. They cannot, upon the principles of ſound policy, give the ſame ſecurity for their attachment to the ſtate as married people. Without wives or children, and without the proſpect of poſterity, they cannot feel the ſame intereſt in the welfare and happineſs of the nation as thoſe men who depoſit there, their deareſt and moſt valuable pledges.

A ſecond inſtrument of reformation, muſt be a more regular and ſevere police directed againſt all houſes of ill fame. If they be not tolerated by law, they are connived at by magiſtrates: they are, in general, well known in every town, and yet no ſerious attempt is ever taken to ſuppreſs them. Whilſt ſuch houſes are countenanced, and even protected by the favour of the magiſtrate, muſt not young men conſider this as an actual encouragement?

couragement? Magiſtrates, they will naturally reaſon, can entertain no great horror for the crime, otherwiſe they would undoubtedly exert themſelves for a total ſuppreſſion. The taſk would not be difficult. But whilſt ſuch houſes are kept open, we muſt expect marriage will be checked, diſeaſe propagated, and adultery and looſeneſs of morals keep conſtantly on the increaſe. Were houſes of induſtry prepared for the reception of common proſtitutes, confinement and hard labour would be the beſt and moſt effectual pennance they could perform. Were they aſſured that this would be the unavoidable conſequence of their lives, if this apprehenſion would not operate as an effectual cure, it might ſerve, however, to reſtrain them more within the bounds of decency, and prevent many of the dreadful effects of the open toleration of ſuch characters. Magiſtrates, who, with the law on their ſide, know and allow ſuch ſwarms of proſtitutes nightly to infeſt the ſtreets, and to lie in ambuſh for the wild, the thoughtleſs, and the intoxicated, commit the moſt glaring inſult on good order, on virtue, and religion: it might be of infinite ſervice to the community, did the laws

inflict

inflict ſome heavy fine or puniſhment on every magiſtrate convicted of this unpardonable neglect of duty. The wiſeſt laws are of no ſervice unleſs put in execution; and it is the greateſt misfortune that can befall any town or city to be curſed with a careleſs or a profligate magiſtracy.

But more ſevere puniſhments for adultery may be mentioned, as the third check to the progreſs of theſe ruinous vices. The puniſhment has varied in different countries, and at different times. Some have made the offence capital, as among the Jews, and during ſome periods of the Roman government. Some have inflicted bodily puniſhments of different kinds. The Greeks permitted the adulterers to redeem themſelves. The primitive Chriſtians puniſhed it by perpetual excommunication. In modern times, and amongſt the moſt civilized nations, it has been treated with too great lenity; and this lenity (ſuch is the perverſeneſs of our improvements) has kept pace with the increaſe of civilization. In Sparta there was no inſtance of adultery. A ſtranger aſked an ancient Spartan, *what puniſhment their laws appointed for adultery?* He anſwered—*my friend, there are no adulterers in our country.* The other

 replied,

replied, *but what if there ſhould be one? Why then*, ſays he, *he muſt forfeit a bull ſo large as to be able to drink up the river Eurotas.* When the ſtranger expreſſed his ſurpriſe at this, and ſaid, *how can ſuch a bull be found?* the Spartan anſwered with a ſmile, *how can an adulterer be found in Sparta?* In Rome, during the firſt five hundred and twenty years of the commonwealth, there was not found an inſtance of a divorce: a proof of the purity of their manners, and how ſacred they held the obligation of marriage. In Britain, adultery is reckoned a ſpiritual offence, and puniſhed, in the ſpiritual courts, by fine and pennance. The common law alſo will give damages, in ſuch caſes, where the party injured has the inclination and the power to bring an action. This is now ſo well underſtood, that actions for crim. con. are now become conſiderable emoluments to ſome of our lawyers; whilſt the ſyſtem purſued in a certain court is to bear down the crime by the weight of the damages: but the juſtice, as well as tendency of ſuch a ſyſtem too cloſely purſued, without a due regard to circumſtance or character, may with great propriety be diſputed. That the adulterer ſhould be fined, and heavily

heavily fined, appears to me extremely equitable, and may operate to the prevention of the crime; but it does not appear equally juſt, or conſiſtent with a reformation of manners, that, in all caſes, the huſband ſhould pocket the money. The indifference, the negligence, the ill uſage of a huſband, may tempt the unfortunate wife to throw herſelf into the arms of ſome gallant; and it may even be his intereſt in ſome caſes to drive her to proſtitution. Our laws in this reſpect are very unfavourable to the female ſex. The unhappy wife has no redreſs for the adulteries and negligence of a worthleſs and careleſs huſband: ſhe muſt be condemned to drag out a miſerable exiſtence, under repeated inſults and diſeaſe brought on by his debaucheries, without the power or proſpect of an eſcape. How dangerous is it then to adopt a ſyſtem which will make the proſtitution of the wife the intereſt of the huſband! This may be the ſpeedieſt way of creating a fortune. In many caſes it will tempt a cool and careleſs huſband to bait with his laſcivious wife to catch the fortune of an opulent fool: in this market he may diſpoſe of a bad wife to great advantage.

Thus, whilſt endeavouring to check the progreſs of this crime on the one hand, you are taking the moſt effectual ſtep on the other for its encouragement. A huſband ought to be the watchful guardian of his wife's honour; if he be negligent, he ought to ſuffer for his indifference or folly, that the diſhonour brought upon himſelf may teach men in general their duty in an article ſo eſſential to the welfare of ſociety. That huſband that can enrich himſelf by his wife's proſtitution, muſt be poſſeſſed of very little delicacy or honour. Every time that I ſat down to a better fare, or appeared in a more reſpectable form, my heart would reproach me with the reflection that theſe I owe to the infidelity, the diſhonour, and proſtitution of a beloved wife.

Great damages then, which is the only remedy our laws have provided for the prevention of this crime, appear very ineffectual, and in many caſes have a very different tendency: for this point being once ſettled, the adulterer reſumes his rank in ſociety. But a crime ſo pernicious to mankind, and which brings with it ſo many evils, ſhould certainly be ſtamped with ſome particular mark of diſgrace. Did theſe crimes

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diſqualify a man for rank and ſtation, incapacitate him for offices of honour and truſt; were their evidence, like that of perjured people, inadmiſſible in all courts of law, and were they alſo rendered incapable of inheriting under certain limitations, theſe deprivations and marks of diſgrace, by holding up their characters to public infamy, whilſt, at the ſame time, they affect their rank and fortune, might be of the moſt eſſential ſervice to check the progreſs of theſe alarming crimes. Infamy, in ſome degree, is ſtamped upon the baſtard, who is innocent, whilſt the adulterer, who is the chief cauſe, ſuffers no diſgrace. Some ſuch marks of infamy and diſgrace would not only be a check upon the offenders, but turn the current of popularity againſt them, and operate thus as a terror to both ſexes.

If the ſeverity of theſe regulations ſhould be complained of, it may be anſwered, that they are far inferior in ſeverity to moſt of our ſanguinary laws. We take away a man's life if he rob us of a trifle, which we can often well ſpare, and even in caſes where preſſing neceſſity may be the urgent cauſe; whilſt he, who robs us of what is more valuable than life, and who commits this

robbery

robbery often in the moſt wanton manner, is ſuffered to eſcape, with the ſlighteſt puniſhment, to triumph over our misfortunes, and to be reſtored again to all his rank and enjoyments. How can we reconcile ſuch abſurdities? Are the morals of our legiſlature ſo corrupt, that no one dare aſſume the confidence to propoſe ſuch corrections and improvements? Under the ridiculous pretence or ſcruples of liberty, theſe ravagers, theſe murderers of the peace of mankind, are ſuffered to roam at large, without one ſhackle or reſtraint. They are abſurdly making laws and iſſuing proclamations againſt prophanity; whilſt they either wiſh not, or are afraid to ſtrike at the root of the evil; as if theſe compliments to the Deity were to appeaſe Him for the moſt glaring outrages againſt man. We are making a parade of reformation in extending Sunday-ſchools: but correct theſe groſs defects in our morals, and there will be no occaſion for them. Theſe are but poor palliatives to correct the ſpreading diſorders.

Fourthly, change the whole ſyſtem of modern female education: every part of it, upon the preſent plan, is favourable to looſeneſs of principle and manners.

ners. There is ſcarcely any proviſion made for rendering them induſtrious, good houſewives, or for providing a proper employment for the mind. Women, in the preſent ſyſtem of education, are treated as the play things and amuſements of the other ſex, as without uſefulneſs and without a character. Muſic, dancing, drawing, &c. all elegant accompliſhments, are the parts of education to which the greateſt attention is paid; all well enough for amuſement, but of little ſervice to her when called upon to direct a houſe and to preſide in a family. From their very infancy, they are initiated in gambling, and long before their education is completed, they are accuſtomed to frequent routs, balls, aſſemblies, card parties, and every place of pleaſure and entertainment. Then the intervals of this buſineſs are filled up with dreſs and the reading of novels. Every thing is contrived, as if on purpoſe, to foment every evil paſſion, and to encourage diſſipation and debauchery. All is gay and entertaining; nothing uſeful and ſerious. How unfit are ſuch women to direct a family, or to bring up children? how ill qualified either for wives or for mothers?

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There ſeems to be a neceſſity for a thorough change and reformation in all the parts of their education. The great object ſhould be, to make them uſeful, to find them rational employment, and to furniſh them with good principles. This would be to raiſe them to their proper rank in ſociety; this would guard them againſt idleneſs, the moſt unfortunate gueſt that can get poſſeſſion of the female breaſt. They would be no worſe companions, and no leſs the ornaments of ſociety, were they to be ſo educated as to become good wives, good mothers, and good miſtreſſes of families. If we may judge from the remains of antiquity now in our hands, this was the rank that women then held among the moſt civilized nations: women of the higheſt rank were occupied in uſeful employments. Solomon, in his book of proverbs, gives the character of a virtuous woman, which we may ſuppoſe a copy from real life, and a copy of the manners of the times. The deſcription is in Prov. xxxi. from the fourth verſe to the end, and is a picture of female manners, taken from very remote antiquity. It is evident, alſo, from ſeveral ſtrokes in this picture, that it belonged not to women of vulgar manners,

or of inferior rank, but to thoſe in the higheſt ſtation: *her clothing is ſilk and purple: her huſband is known in the gate when he ſitteth among the elders of the land.* The whole is well worth tranſcribing, and to be ſtudied and copied by every woman. Homer, the hiſtorian of manners, gives us ſeveral particulars of the induſtry of his women. He particularly deſcribes how Andromache, the wife of Hector, was employed when the news of the death of her huſband reached her:

> Far in the cloſe receſſes of the dome,
> Penſive ſhe ply'd the melancholy loom;
> A growing work emp'oy'd her ſecret hours,
> Confus'dly gay with intermingled flowers.
>
> Pope's Iliad, XXII. 566.

We have, even in this country, ſome valuable monuments of the induſtry of women in former times. Within our own memories, the female character has undergone a very great revolution, amounting almoſt to a total change in their lives and manners. The ſpirit of gambling, dreſs, reading of novels, the routine of plays, balls, and aſſemblies, are all of modern date, and ſamples of modern improvement. The whole ſyſtem ſeems contrived to bring them up for courtezans

and ſtrumpets, not for mothers and wives. Thoſe that are not compelled to induſtry from the neceſſity of their circumſtances, ſhould however be trained up to ſuch exerciſes as may ſerve to fill up their time with pleaſure, and to find employment both for body and mind. The preſent ſyſtem is unfavourable for both. Late hours and diſſipation, the mind continually on the rack, in its ſearch of pleaſure, will ſoon affect the health, and bring on thoſe diſeaſes, which, if they do not terminate life immediately, will deprive it of all enjoyments.

Direct their education ſo as to furniſh them with entertainment from themſelves; prohibit all thoſe idle and vicious writings which inflame the paſſions and poiſon the mind. There are a variety of branches of education, which would not only employ but intereſt women of fortune, and poſſeſſed of an inquiſitive mind: hiſtory, travels, geography, aſtronomy, the various parts of natural hiſtory, ſuch as botany, &c. inform, delight, and elevate the mind. Try to turn the current of faſhion into this channel: would ſome lady of rank give the example, the whole ſex in time would follow; and that lady who could have

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this commanding influence would deſerve to be celebrated as the greateſt benefactreſs of the world. If poſſible, check that levity and giddineſs of behaviour, too much the characteriſtic of the preſent time; deſtroy the ſpirit of gambling, and give a more ſerious and important caſt to the manners. A profound obſerver of mankind tells us: "that the ſage legiſlators of republican ſtates "have always required of women a particular "gravity of manners: they have proſcribed, not "only vice, but the very appearance of it: they "have baniſhed even all commerce of gallantry; "a commerce that produced idleneſs, that ren- "dered the women corrupters even before they "were corrupted, that gives a value to trifles, "and debaſes things of importance."

But, in the education of the female ſex, let us not overlook the importance of religion. Women, in matters of religion, are certainly more apt to run into extremes than the other ſex; careleſs or negligent on the one hand, amounting to an abſolute indifference; enthuſiaſtic or ſuperſtitious on the other, they paſs into the groſſeſt abſurdities. Try to give to them rational principles; render religion to them not merely a round of

ſervices,

ſervices, or a ſyſtem of dark tenets and doctrines, but direct its principles to their underſtandings, that they may be convinced, upon good grounds, both of its truth and its importance. Nothing is ſo well calculated, as the chriſtian religion, to ſeize upon the tender and amiable affections. The hiſtory of the life and character of Jeſus Chriſt, properly attended to, cannot fail to engage the heart, and to command the attention. A ſincere diſciple of Chriſt will be neither a libertine nor an enthuſiaſt. Religion will give a luſtre to their beauty and a ſteadineſs to their conduct; it will preſerve them from levity, and alſo from melancholy. Religion will diffuſe a ſerene chearfulneſs and joy over the whole life. A woman without religion may poſſeſs charms, but a wife without religion muſt be an object of horror. In ſhort, a woman, whoſe character is marked by induſtry, and attention to domeſtic concerns, whoſe underſtanding is enlightened by pure knowledge and ſcience, whoſe heart is guided by rational religion, and in whom youth and beauty unite, is, without doubt, the loveliеſt work of God.

FINIS.